

THE
BENEFITE
of Affliction.

A Sermon, first preached, and afterwards enlarged, by *Charles Richardson* Preacher at *Saint Katharines* neare to the Tower of *London*.

PSAL. 94. 12.

Blessed is the man whom thou chastisest, O Lord, and teachest him in thy Lawe.



LONDON

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THE BENEFIT OF A...

A person, his property, and in
the same manner, by the
... of the ...
... of the ...

... of the ...
... of the ...
... of the ...



... of the ...
... of the ...
... of the ...
... of the ...


¶ To the right honour-
able and truly Religious Lady,
the Lady ELIZABETH Coun-
tesse of Lincolne, grace and
peace be mul-
tiplied.

Right Honourable,



First preched
this Sermon
at the buriall
of one, who
on his death-
bed gaue or-
der, that this
Text might then bee handled.
And hauing since, vpon some o-
ther occasion, enlarged the same,
I haue presumed, in your Honors
A 2 name,

M. Brockles-
by a Gold-
smith in
Cheapside.

THE EPISTLE

name, to make it more publike, by committing it to the Presse. The reason that mooued mee, besides mine owne priuate respect (wherby I confesse I am bound to doe your Honour all the seruice I can, in regarde of the great fauour which for many yeares I haue found at your hands) is this, because I know the Doctrine of it doeth most properly appertaine vnto you: who a long time haue felt these blessed fruits of affliction your selfe in a most plentiful manner. If euer *Patience* hath had *her perfect worke* in anie, it hath beene in you: who haue not onlie been thereby *more then a Conquerour*: but also haue learned to contemne and despise all outward crosses, as not able to come neare your soule, beeing mounted vp so high about their reach. Yea
hereby

James 1. 4.
Rom 8. 37.

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hereby the graces which GOD hath wrought in your Honour, haue beene so tried, like golde in the furnace, as they haue shined forth, in such excellent and glorious manner, that all that haue knowne you, haue beene drawne into admiration thereof. For mine owne part, I must needs acknowledge, that I neuer came to your Honour, but I went away ashamed, to see my selfe so much inferior in grace vnto you. I haue many times wondred, to beholde your exceeding diligent attention in hearing the word, your blessed memorie to retaine the thinges which you haue heard, and your godlie care to make an holie vse thereof in the whole course of your life. And as your desire is great to heare the word in publique: so you spend much time in

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Pfal: 1. 2.
1 Cor. 1. 5:
Heb. 5. 14.

Prou. 3. 1. 1.

2 Tim. 3. 15.

the priuat reading of the same, making it your chief delight, *to meditate in the Lawe of the Lord day and night*: whereby you are made rich in knowledge: and, *through long custome haue your witte exercised, to discerne both good and euill*. But you haue not thought it sufficient to bee thus Christianly affected your selte, but your care hath bin likewise extended to your children that they also might be trained vp in sound religion. It would do a man good, to heare the sweet lessons and gracious instructions, which you like another *Bath-sheba* haue taught your little ones, causing them as yong *Timotheus* did, to know the holy Scriptures, euen from their cradles. Whereby you haue made so deepe an impression of godlinesse in their hearts, as (I trust) the diuell shall neuer be able to

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to rase out. Neither hath your goodnes bin dammed vp in your owne priuate familie, but it hath also flowed tooorth to the good of others. For at such time as God denied your Honour that plenti- full vse of his word, which I know you thirsted and panted after, as earnestlie as euer did the Hart *after the riuers of water*, whensoever you had anie oportunitie of hearing it offered vnto you, you did not ingrosse it, as worldlings doe their commodities, to your owne priuate vse alone, but with good *Cornelius*, you called together your neighbours and friends, that they also might bee partakers of the grace of God with you. And howsoever you haue not in former times had such means to performe externall works of charitie, as God hath afforded vnto others:

Psal. 24. 1.

Acts 10. 24.

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2 Cor. 8. 3.

yet to your power, yea and beyond your power, you haue been willing to do good that way also. For you spent not your estate in pride and brauerie (for that you neuer affected) but your richest dressings and attire were the ornaments of the *Apostle*, as *Tertulian* saith. Your earings were the word of God, your neck-laces the yoke of *Christ*, your silken and veluet garments were pietie and holinesse. By which meanes you spared much from vaine and idle expences (wherein too many of your place doe greatly exceede) that you might haue something, to giue to such as stand need of reliefe: especially to the Ministers of the word, which brought vnto you the glad tidings of peace and saluation. There is none that hath beene more readie to entertaine them

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them at all times, nor to vse them with greater respect then your Honour hath done. And as I can witnesse, how earnestlie you haue desired, that you might but liue to doe more good in the Church of God: so I doubt not, but God hauing at the last, in mercie granted your desire, you will be mindfull to pay the vowes, *which your lips haue promised, and your mouth hath spoken in your affliction.* I doubt not, but with vertuous *Ruth*, you will shew more goodnesse *in the latter end, then at the beginning:* that as all that haue knowne you, haue hitherto called you, *The good Lady Clinton*, so you may now be called, *The good Countesse of Lincolne.* You see (right Honourable) how farre I haue been transported with the admiration of your excellent vertues. God is
my

Psa. 66. 13, 14

Ruth 3. 10.

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my witnesse, I haue not done it to flatter, or to *giue Titles* to your Honour, for then *my Maker would reprove me*: and I know your humilitie is such, as you loue not to heare your owne praises. But I do it in the sinceritie of my soule, that GOD may haue the glorie of his graces, and that the Church may be edified by your example: I would all the great Ladies in the Land would tread in your steps: so should they shine as so many glorious diamonds in the Church of God. For it is not the greatnes of their birth, nor the eminencie of their places, that can so ennoble them, and make them so trulie honourable in the sight of God and his children, as the admirable graces which appeare in you. I pray GOD, euen from the botto-
me of my heart, to blesse your
Honour

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Honour with many happie daies,
in this life, to perfect the good
worke which hee hath beguane
in you, and in the end, to bring
you to that immortall inheritance
that fadeth not away, which is
reserued in Heauen for you.

*Your Honours most
humbly deuoted,*

CHARLES

RICHARDSON.

DEDICATORY.

ther I shall ever haue opportunity, to publish senerall things in euery one of your names in particular : I haue thought good, to take this occasion, to manifest my thankfull acknowledgements of the kindnesse of you all in generall : which hath bene extended, not to me onely, but to many others of my calling. For I may truly giue this testimony of you, that you haue all shewed great loue to the faithfull Ministers of God, and when any of them haue resorted vnto you, you haue according to the Apostles precept, receiued them with all gladnesse, and made much of them. The matter of this Sermon is concerning affliction, whereof you haue all had your portion more or lesse : and therefore, the Doctrine contained in it, doth fitly appertaine to you all. But especially to you my good Ladie Scot, whom the Lord hath caused to drinke deeper of this cuppe then many others. But as it hath pleased God, hitherto to support you with grace and patience: so I doubt not, but hee will, in his good time, make a blessed end with you, as hee did with lob, making you glad againe accor-

Phil 2.29.

James 5.11.
Psal. 90.15.

THE EPISTLE &c.

according to the yeares wherein you
haue seene euill. *If these meditations
of mine may minister any comfort unto
you, or to any other in the like case, I
shal thinke my labour well bestowed. And
thus presuming that you will kindly ac-
cept of this my poore seruice which in my
sincereſt affection I tender unto you, I
commend all your Ladiships to God,
and to the word of his grace, who is
able to build you further, and to giue
you an inheritance among them that
are sanctified.*

Your Ladiships in all due-
tiſull affection.

C H A R L E S

R I C H A R D S O N,

Errata.

Pag. 7. li. 4. reade, diuers tentations. pag. 9. li. 17. reade, borne. pag. 10. li. 18. reade siluer. lin. 26. reade, army. pag. 11 li. 4 reade, were constrained pa. 28. li. 10. reade, concerning inward tentations, is true also of outward afflictions. pa. 35. li. 10. reade, strange. pa. 40. li. 5. put out And. ta. 41 li. 18. reade, broken in pag. 45. li. 6. for violent, reade, godly. ibid in marg. lege malicia.

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names of the authors, is placed in
the first column, and the names of
the books, in the second column.
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names of the publishers.
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names of the booksellers, and the
eighth column contains the
names of the booksellers.

THE BENEFITE *of Affliction.*

*Pfal. 119. 71. It is good for mee that I
haue beene Afflicted, that I may
learne thy Statutes.*



IF it bee lawfull to make
comparisons betweene
one part of the holy
Scripture and another,
which is all most *excel-*

*Pfal. 119, 129
2. Tim. 3. 16.*

lent, as *Dauid* saith, being *inspired* by
one and the same blessed spirit of God:
wee may truly say that there is no
part more worthy then the booke of
Psalmes, and in them, none more full
of heauenly instruction then this
Psalme. The author whereof is gene-
rally agreed vpon to be *Dauid*, whome

B

the

2, Sam, 13, 1.

the Scripture hath stiled, *The sweete singer of Israel*. Who as he had a good facultie in the art of diuine *Poetry*, & a great dexteritie in penning of *Psalmes*, to the glory of God, and the edification of his Church: so it is euident that he shewed the excellencie of his skill in composing this *Psalm*: being there vnto occasioned and excited by the great afflictions that were vpon him. For the *Psalm* seemeth to haue beene penned in the time of his exile and banishment, whereby hee laboureth to confirme his faith, by many comfortable meditations of the word of God. The matter of the *Psalm* containeth many instructions and prayers, all tending to direct vs in the way of godlynesse. The generall proposition of it is this, that they that are truely godly, are truely blessed, and that they are truely godly, that are acquainted with the word of God, and are carefull to frame their liues according to the directions and rules thereof.

And therefore he laboureth by many arguments throughout the whole
Psalm,

Psalm, and especially by his owne example to stirre vp all the children of God, both to the continuall meditation, and due practise of the word.

The *Psalm*, as it is the longest of all the rest, being diuided into two and twentie seuerall parts: so it is more curiously and more artificially penned then any of the rest. For first, all the parts and diuisions of it are of equall length, each of them consisting of eight verses. Againe, euery diuision in the originall beginneth with an *Hebrew* letter according to the *Alphabet*, and euery verse in that diuision beginneth with the same letter. And last of all, there is not any verse in the whole *Psalm* but one, which maketh not some mention of the word of God, and hath not some title or other, to set out and commend the excellencie of it. As it is called the *Law*, the *Testimonies*, the *Waies*, the *Precepts*, the *Statutes*, the *Commaundements*, the *Iudgements*, the *promise*, the *truth*, the *ordinances*, the *name of God* &c. Now the reasons why the *Prophet* is so

Verse 122:

B 2.

exqui-

exquisite in framing of this *Psalme*, is to commend the excellencie of the matter contained in it, that so we may be stirred vp to regard it with greater attention. For where the Lord is curious in speaking, there should we be most diligent in hearing and learning. As also it was no small helpe to the memory: for being written in the *Hebrew* tongue, it was to the *Jewes* in steed of an ho'y *Alphabet*, which they might learne as our children doe the *A.B.C.*

Now concerning this ninth part of the *Psalme*, wherein this verse that I haue read is contained, the *Prophet* hauing first thankfully acknowledged Gods mercie in *dealing grationsly with him*, he maketh his petition to be further taught & instructed in the knowledge of Gods will. Which petition he vrgeth and inforceth with diuerse reasons. First, because hee had *beleeued Gods Commaundement* in the end of that verse. A second reason is taken from his former vntowardnesse and vntrestablenesse, that hee had beene like

Ve l.65.

Verl.66.

like an unruly beast, that would not keep the way without beating. Where by the way, hee sheweth the benefite that the children of God doe receiue by the crosse. Namely, that it subdueth the vntamednesse of their nature, and maketh them liue in better order. After this he repeateth his former acknowledgement of Gods goodnesse, and renueth his petition to be taught, backing it with another reason in the two next verses. And in this verse hee repeateth that which hee said before concerning affliction, though in other words. *It is good for mee that I haue beene afflicted, that I may learne thy Statutes.* Wherein wee are to consider, first, the person that was afflicted, and that is *David* himselfe. *It is good for me, that I haue beene afflicted.* Secondly, the fruite which hee found in his affliction, which is propounded first generally, *It is good for mee, &c.* And then by a particular effect, which was wrought in him thereby, *That I may learne thy Statutes.* And thus we see the coherence that these words

Verf. 67.

Verf. 68.

have with the former, together with the sum and resolution of them. Let vs now come to the severall instructions contained in them.

It is good for me.) In the example of *David*, we learne, that euen the Godly themselues are subiect to many afflictions. The dearest of Gods children may, and oftentimes doe suffer affliction with varietie, extremitie, and continuance. *Many* saith *David*, *or great, are the troubles of the righteous.* Yea God doth many times feede his owne children with the bread of teares, and giueth them teares to drinke in great measure. And hee threatneth euen those, with whom he hath made a sure couenant, and from whom hee will neuer take his mercie and louing kindnesse, that *if they forsake his lawe and walke not in his iudgements: If they breake his statutes and keepe not his commandments, hee will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquitie with strokes.* And to this purpose is that saying of *Solomon*, that euen a iust man falleth seuen times, that

is

Psal. 34, 19

Psal 80, 5.

Psal. 89, 30,
31, 32, 33.

Pro 24, 16

is, is afflicted oft and many times. And the *Apostle James* exhorteth the faithful, to count it exceeding joy when they fall into tentations, or afflictions. And hereof the *Prophet David* himselfe is a most pregnant example. Hee was a man that God had set up on high, the Anointed of the God of *Iacob*. Yea by the Lords owne testimony, he was a man after his owne heart: and yet he affirmeth of himselfe, that daily hee had beene punished, and chastened euery morning. Euery day that wet ouer his head, brough with it some affliction or other. He was persecuted by *Saul*, who pursued him from place to place, as one would hunt a partridge in the mountaines. He was falsely accused by *Dog*, that cursed *Edomite*, betrayed and discovered by the false hearted *Ziphims*. He was discomforted and derided by his wife that lay in his bosom. He had many heartbreakings with his children. *Ziglag*, the towne which *Archish* king of *Gath* had giuen him for his habitation, was sacked & burnt by the *Amalekites*, & his wiues y were the

Iam. 1, 2,

2. Sam. 12, 1,
1. Sam. 13, 14.

Psal. 73, 14:

1. Sam. 26; 20

and *22, 9,*
and *23, 19, 20*

2. Sam. 6, 20

1. Sam. 30;
1, 5.

comfort of his life, were taken prisoners. Yea it may appeare to all that shall read his story in both the bookes of *Samuel*, that, as if hee had beene a man borne to misery, hee scarce had one good day in all his life.

Neither was this the case of *David* alone, but euen all the children of God mentioned in the Scripture, haue also beene partakers of the same condition. *Rom. 9. 13.* *Jacob* that holy Patriarke, on whom God had set his loue before he was borne, was many waies afflicted in the greatest part of his life. He was hated of his brother, and for feare of his fury, forced to leaue his owne cuntry and his fathers house, and to liue as a seruant in a strange land for the space of twentie yeares. He was vexed with the vnkindnesse of his churlish Vncle, who notwithstanding his faithfull seruice, changed his wages ten times. He was vpbraided and slandered by his Cosins, the sonnes of *Laban*. He was grieved with the peeuish behauiour of his wiues, and much discomforted by his children. *Job* likewise,

wife , though a godly man, one of whom the Lord himselfe testified, that he was *an upright and a iust man , one that feared God and eschewed euill*: Yet his life for a long time , was euen a Mappe of misery. It was no small affliction to loose such a deale of substance all in a day, to haue his children so pittifully dismembred, to haue his wife and his friends that should haue asswaged his sorrow, to play the *miserable comforters* , and to adde affliction vnto his misery , and which was worst of all, to haue *the terrors of God to fight against him*. Solomon also , of whom the Lord said before euer hee were bone ; *He shall bee my Sonne, and I will bee his Father* , and concerning whom he promised , that *his mercie should neuer depart from him as he tooke it from Saul* : though he enioyed great prosperitie for many yeares: yet when he turned his heart from the Lord God of Israell & kept not that which he had commaunded him, the Lord raised him vp aduersaries one after another, which molested him with warres al the dayes of

Iob. 1. 8.

Iob. 16. 2, and 6. 4.

1. Chr. 22. 10

2. Sam. 7. 15.

1. King. 11 9. 10.

1.Kin.11,14
23,26

2.Kin.18, 5,5

Verse 13,14,
15,16

37.

and 19,10,11.

of his life. As first *Hadad*, then *Rezon*, and after him *Ieroboam*, and when he was dead, ten tribes of the kingdom were rent away from his sonne. And *Hezekiah* a man so *upright in the sight of the Lord*, as after him there was none like him among all the Kings of *Iudab*, neither were there any such before him; was notwithstanding exercised with grievous and continuall afflictions. First of all, *Sanecherib* king of *Assyria* came vp against all the strong cities of *Iudab*, and tooke them: and hee to make his peace, was constrained to giue him three hundred talents of silver, and thirtie talents of gold. For raising of which summe, hee was forced to take all the silver, that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the kings house, yea he pulled off the plates of y^e doore of the temple, and the pillars which himselfe had couered ouer, and gaue them to the making vp of the tribute. And yet notwithstanding all this, *Sanecherib* presently after sent a great army against *Ierusalem* to destroy it, and caused *Rabshakeb*

Shakeb with a blacke mouth, to the breaking of *Hezekiahs* heart, to blaspheme the name of the living God. And he was no sooner by Gods mercie deliuered out of this danger, but straightway he was visited with a sore sicknesse (and as some thinke with the plague) which in all appearance was vnto death. So *Lazarus*, at whose death the *Angels* of heauen were employed to carry his soule into *Abrahams* bosome, was in his lifetime poore, impotent, harbourlesse, distressed, and vn pittied. In a word, these famous worthies of the world, that the *Apostle* speaketh off, of whom the world was not worthy, were tryed, some by mockings and scourgings, some by bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were hewen asunder, they were tempted, they were slaine by the sword, they wandered vp and downe in sheepes skins & goates skins, being destitute, afflicted & tormented. And as this is true in the generall, that Gods children are subiect to many & great afflictions: so it is true also in y^e particuler, that there is not any seuerall

and 10, 1,

Luk 16. 20, 21
22

Heb. 11, 36.
37. 38.

Gen. 6. 9. and
9. 22. 25.

Rom. 4. 11.

Gen. 21. 9.

Gal. 4. 29:

Heb. 12. 16.

Gen. 26. 34.
35. and 27. 46
and 28. 8 9.

uerall kinde of calamitie, but it may befall a godly man. There can be no greater griefe to godly parents, then to be troubled with wicked & gracelesse children: and yet the Scripture hath many examples, of the holiest men that euer liued, that haue beene afflicted that way. *Noah* was a iust and vpright man in his time, and walked with God: yet had he a wretched *Cham* that scoffed at the infirmities of his father, and therefore was cursed, both himsele, and his posteritie. *Abraham* that was the Father of all them that belecue, had a wicked *Ishmael*, the sonne of the bondwoman, who by mocks and taunts, persecuted *Isaack* the sonne of the promise. Holy *Isaak* had a profane *Esau* as the Apostle calleth him, who of set purpose to displease his father tooke him wiues of other nations, as bad as himsele, who by their disobedience and rebellion, were a griefe of minde to his parents, and made his mother wearie of her life. Good *Iacob* was troubled with *Simeon* and *Leui*, brethren in euill, who in their wrath
and

and selfewill, committed such a bloodie outrage vpon the *Sichemites*, as caused their father to bee abhorred among the inhabitants of the Land. *Eli* the Priest, a good man, had sonnes that were wicked and knewe not the Lord, who behaued themselues so vilely in their places, lying with the women that assembled at the doore of the Tabernacle of the congregation, that men abhorred the offering of the Lord. Faithfull *Samuel*, the Lords Prophet, as hee is called by the holy Ghost, had sonnes that walked not in his wayes, but turned aside after lucre, and tooke rewards and peruerterd iudgements. And *Dauid* of whom wee haue heard such high commendation before, had as much heart-breake by his children, as euer poore father could haue. First *Amnon* most beastly rauished and defloured *Tamar* his owne sister. Afterward *Absalom*, to reuenge that villeny, inuited him to a feast at his Sheepe-sheering, and caused his seruants treacherously to kill him. And in the end hee rebelled against his father, driue him out of his kingdome,

Gen. 34. 30.
and 49. 5, 6

1. Sam. 2. 12.
17, 22.

and 3. 20.

and 8. 3.

2 Sam. 13. 14.
24. 28.

cap. 15. 16. 37.
18

Iob. 3 1. 1.

8

9. 10.

and 19. 15,

16

17.

kingdom, and had not God prevented him, would haue taken the Crowne from his head. It is no small miserie, to be exposed to open contempt and reproach in the world, to be despised and made the laughing stocke of base people. And yet this was *Iobs* case, and that in as high a degree as possibly could be. For so he complaineth, that euen they *whose fathers hee refused to set with the dogs of his stocke*, mocked him and insulted ouer him. Yea *the children of villaines*, and such as were *more vile then the earth*, made him their song and their talke. Yea they did not spare to spit in his face. Neither was this indignitie offered him by strangers onely, but he was despised also in his owne family. *They that dwelt in his house* (as he saith) *and his maides tooke him for a stranger*. He called his seruants but he would not answere, though he praised him with his mouth. Yea his breath was strange to his wife, though he prayed her for the childrens sake of his owne body. Hee that shall consider the great authoritie that *Iob* was in before the Lord

Lord humbled him, as hee saith, how men of all sorts esteemed and reuerenced him, may easily thinke, what a grieft it was to his heart, to bee now made a laughing stocke to fooles. And *David*, had his part likewise in the same crosse. For *the abjects assembled themselves against him*, in time of his aduersitie, *they tare him and ceased not. The scoffers at banquetts gnashed their teeth against him. Yea, he became a proverbe and a byword unto them*, and *the very drunkards made songs of him.*

Psal. 35:15, 16

and 69, 11, 12

It is a grievous thing to bee imprisoned, to lye in darkenesse in the shadowe of death, fast bound in misery and yron, as *David* saith. And yet many of Gods dearest children haue bin tryed and afflicted therewith. *Ioseph*, a good man, and one that was alwayes carefull not to sinne against God, by the false accusation of his *Mistresse* was put in prison, where hee lay diuerse yeeres, so as his feete was hurt in the stockes and the yron entred into his soule.

and 107, 10.

Gen. 39, 19.

20.

Psal. 105:18.

Jeremiah,

Ier. 1. 5

and 20. 1, 2,

and 32. 2,

and 37. 15, 16,

and 38. 6,

1 Kin. 22. 17,

Act. 12. 4, 6, 7

Jeremiab, a man that was sanctified by the Lord before hee came out of the wombe, and ordained to be a Prophet, was often brought into this affliction. First, Pashur the Priest smote him, and put him in the stocks that were in the gate of Benjamin. After this, hee was shut up in the court of the prison, that was in the King of Iudahs house. Againe, the princes smote him, and laide him in prison in the house of Ichonathan the scribe, where hee remained in the dungeon a long time. And last of all, they tooke him & cast him into the dungeon that was in the court of the prison, and let him downe with cordes, where there was no water but mire: so that he sticke fast in the mire. So likewise Michaiah a faithfull Prophet, by the commandement of Abab, was put into the prison house, where he was fed with the bread of affliction, and with water of affliction. And the Apostle Peter was caught vp by Herod, and put in prison, and deliuered to foure quaternions of soldiers to be kept, where hee was bound with two chaines, not his feete onely, but

but his hands also. And the *Apostle Paul* and *Silas* were deliuered to a cruell *taylor*, who cast them into the *bot-tome*, or *dungeon* of the *prison*, and made fast their *feete* in the *stockes*. And thus were many of Gods blessed *Martyrs* vsed in the time of *Papery*. Who were not onely put in *prison*, but they were kept in the *stockes* both hands and *feete*, so long, as some of them dyed as they fate.

and 16.23.24

Shipwreake is a fearefull thing and a heauie affliction: yet the *Apostle Paul* suffored it *thrise*, as he saith himselfe. The *Euangelist S. Luke* recordeth one of them at large. Namely, that they were *tested with an exceeding tempest*, in so much as they were enforced to *lighten the ship*, by casting the goods into the sea, yea with their owne hands to cast out the *tackling* of the ship. Yea the tempest that lay vpon them was of that continuance, that neither *sunne* nor *starres* for many dayes appeared, and all hope that they should be *saued* was taken away. And in the end, the forepart of the ship *sticke fast* in a narrow place of

2. Cor. 11.25.

Act. 27.18.19
20.

41.43.44.

the sea, and could not be moued, and the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waues. And the men that were in her, constrained so many as could swimme, to cast themselues into the sea, and so goe out to land and the rest, some vpon bords, and some on pieces of the ship, to escape and saue themselues. He that had stood on the shore at that time, no doubt should haue seene a fearefull and lamentable spectacle: but hee that had beene a partie in it himselfe, would haue found it an vpspeakeable danger.

Deut. 13, 6,

1. Sam. 18,
13.

2. Sam. 1, 6,

It is a great heauinesse for a man to loose a louing friend, which was to him as his owne soule, as Moses saith. And yet this was Dauids case in the death of Jonathan, whose soule was knit to the soule of David, and they loued one another as their owne soules, and they made a covenant together. And how hee tooke it to heart, may appeare by that dolefull lamentation, that he maketh for him when he heard the tydings of his death; Woe is me for thee my brother Jonathan: very kinde hast

hast thou beene to me: thy loue to me
was wonderful, passing the loue of women.

The losse of children by any meanes
whatsoeuer, is a great griefe to kinde
and louing parents, who haue borne
them with great paine and trauell, and
brought them vp with much care and
cost. But to be de priued of them by vn-
timely & violent & feareful death, is a
griefe that cannot be expressed. None
knoweth the greatnes of it, but they
that haue felt it. And yet this hath be-
fallen euen y dearest of Gods children.

Aaron, whom the Scripture calleth the
Saint of the Lord, had his two sons *Nadab*
& *Abihu* fearfully destroyed both
in a momēt with fire from heauen. *Elis*
a good man, had likewise his two sons
Hophni and *Phinehas* slaine in battell
both on a day. *Iob* also, whose godli-
nesse we haue heard before, had all his
children, *seuen sonnes and three daugh-*
ters, pittifully slaine, & crusht in pieces
with the fall of an house. But the grea-
test griefe of all is, when a mans childe
is taken away in some sin, so as, besides
the death of the bodie, hee hath iust

Psal. 106, 16.

Lewit. 10, 1:

1. Sam. 4 11;

Iob. 1, 2, 19.

2. Sam. 18, 33.

cause to feare the death of the soule. And yet this was good *Dauids* case, in the losse of his *Abfalom*, which made him breake forth into such passionate mourning as he did. *O my son Abfalom, my sonne, my sonne Abfalom, would God I had dyed for thee, O Abfalom my sonne, my sonne.*

Pro. 5, 18;

Deut. 13, 6

Prou. 5, 19.

Ezech. 24, 16

Gen. 23, 2.

and 35, 19.

Gen. 20, 16

It is a great griefe for a man to bee deprived of the *wife of his youth*, which hath long *lyen in his bosome*, which for many yeares hath beene vnto him as the *louing hinde and pleasant Roe*, in whose loue he hath so long delighted, and which was the *pleasure and desire of his eyes*. And yet this befell those two holy Patriarkes *Abraham and Iacob*, *Abraham* was deprived of his dearest *Sara*, and *Iacob* of *Rabel*, whom he so much affected.

There cannot be a greater affliction to a poore woman, then to loose a kinde and louing husband, which was the *vaile of her eyes* in all places. But with the losse of an husband, to be bereft of all meanes of maintenance, and exposed to extreame pouertie, is such

a crosse as can hardly bee imagined. And yet wee haue exampleseuen of this kinde also. Poore *Naomi*, was de-
 priued of her husband in a strange cū-
 try, where she had few friends, and
 small meanes, and her two sonnes,
 which had taken them wiues there in
 the land of *Moab*, died also, so that
 she was left alone and destitute of suc-
 cour? And how much she was affec-
 ted with this calamitie, may appeare
 by her speeches, when she returned a-
 gaine into her owne country. *Call me*
not Naomi, saith she (that is beautifull)
but call me Mara (that is bitter) *for the*
Almightie hath giuen me much bitter-
nesse. I went out full, and the Lord
bath brought me home againe emptie:
why then call yee me Naomi, seeing the
Lord hath humbled mee, and the Al-
mightie hath brought mee into aduersi-
tie. So likewise the *Prophets* wife that
 dyed in the land of *Israel*, besides the
 losse of her husband, was left in great
 debt, and hauing nothing to pay, the
 mercilesse creditour came to take her
 two sonnes to be his bondmen.

Ruth 1.3.

9.

10.

11:

2.Kim.4:1.

Gen: 35. 17. 18

Sai. m. 4. 19.
20.

1. Sam 4. 18

1. Kin. 13. 24

2. Kin. 23. 29

It is an vncomfortable thing to dy in childbirth: and yet it was the case of *Rabel Jacobs* wife, who dyed in the paines of her labour: & of *Eliets* daughter in lawe, who hearing that the arke of God was taken, and her husband and father in law were dead, bowed her selfe and trauelled, and in her trauell dyed.

It is teareful to dye a violent death, and yet it is a thing that hath happened euen vnto those that were deare vnto God. *Eli* (of whom wee haue heard before) when he heard mention of the losse of Gods Arke, being heauie and vnweildie with age, fell backward from his seat, and his necke was broken, and so he dyed. The Prophet of the Lord, that was sent to cry against the altar, which *Ieroboam* had made at *Bethel*, because he kept not the commandement which the Lord commaunded him, a lyon met him by the way and slew him, and his carcase was cast in the way. And good *Iosiah*, who is so highly commended for his godlinesse, was notwithstanding slaine in the warres by *Pharao Necho*, king of Egypt,

Egypt. Nay a man may be so far left to himselfe, as he may comit such a sinne, wherby he may deserue to be cut off by the sword of the Magistrate, & yet still be the child of God. As the sins y^e *Dauid* comitted, by y^e expresse law of God were to be punished with death, if there had bin any Magistrat aboue him that had had power to inflict it. By all these particular instances, & many more that might be produced, it may appear, that there is not any kind of afflictio or calamity, but y^e children of God may be subiect to it: according to that enumeration which the *Apostle* maketh, whē he saith, *Who shal separate vs from the loue of Christ, shal tribulation, or anguish or persecution, or famine, or nakednesse, or perill or sword, &c.* A man may bee subiect to all these miseries, & yet not be deprived of the loue of Christ.

Rom. 8. 35.

But besides all these outward afflictions, the children of God may bee, and oftentimes are subiect to inward fear & horror of conscience, which as *Solomon* saith, is y^e most intolerable torment y^e can be indured *The spirit of a man*

Prou. 18. 14.

Iob. 6. 4.

Psal. 22. 1.

and 32. 3. 4.

and 38. 2. 3.
4. 5. 6. 7. 8.

wil sustain his infirmitie: but a wounded spirit who can bear? Iob was not only afflicted in his body and outward estate, but also troubled and wounded in his conscience, with the fearful apprehension of Gods wrath. And therefore hee complaineth, that the arrowes of the Almighty were in him, the venime or poyson wherof did drinke up his spirit, and the terrours of God did fight, or set themselves in array against him. And David cryeth out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken mee, and art so farre from my health, and from the words of my roaring? And in another place he saith, When I held my tongue, my bones consumed, when I roared all the day long. For thy hand was heauie vpon me day and night, and my moysture is turned into the drought of summer. And in another place, he maketh such a lamentable complaint, as if hee had beene brought to the very pit of desperation. Thine arrowes, saith hee, sticke fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore. There is nothing sound in my flesh, because of thine anger: neither is there

there any rest in my bones, by reason of my sinne. For mine iniquities are gone ouer mine head, and as a mightie burden they are too heauie for mee. My wounds stincke, and are corrupt because of my foolishnesse. I am bowed and crooged very sore: I goe mourning all the day. For my reins are full of burning, and there is nothing sound in my flesh. I am weakened, and sore broken: I roare for the very griefe of my heart, &c. And againe, Out of the deepe places haue I called vnto thee, O Lord: as if hee had beene euen in the bottome of hell. In a word, Hezekiah that good King complaineth, that besides the sicknesse which God laid vpon his bodie, that brought him euen to deathes dore, the Lord had broken al his bones like a lyon, and from day to night he made an end of him, and that he chattered like a crane or swallow, and mourned as a dove. By this we see, that euen the children of God doe many times wrastle with desperation it selfe: and the Lord doth so long hide his face from them, as they seeme vtterly to be forsaken, and
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II. 38. 13. 14

beginne to thinke, that *his mercie is cleane gone for ever*, as *David* saith, and that *hee will bee fauourable no more*. And therefore, the Church of God is compared to a *lillie among thornes*, to giue vs to vnderstand, that though it be very louely & beautifull in the sight of God: yet it is subiect to many miseries, and accombred with many molestations.

But here it may be some will obiekt, if the case bee so that the children of God be subiect to so many & great afflictions, then it seemeth, that either their sins are not fully forgiuen them, or else, that God is not iust in inflicting such punishments vpon them. To this I answer, that first, for the sins of Gods children, they are all absolutely forgiuen. *The blood of Christ*, as the *Apostle* saith, *doth cleanse vs from al sin*. So that though they be as scarlet, yet the Lord maketh them as white as snow, & thogh they be red like crimson, hee maketh them as well. Yea the Lord putteth away our transgressions like a cloud, and our sinnes like a mist, he subdueth our iniquities,

Psal. 103. 3

Col. 2. 13

1. Iohn. 1. 7.

Isa 1. 8,

and, 44. 22.

Mich 7. 19

iniquities, and casteth them into the bottom of the Sea. So as they shall neuer rile vp in iudgement against vs to accule or condemne vs. Againe, the Lord is righteous in all his waies, & holy in all his workes : and being Iudge of all the world, as Abraham said, he must needs do right. And forasmuch as our Saviour Christ hath satisfied Gods iustice for our sins, & hath borne them in his bodie on the crosse : & feing the Lord hauing punished them once in Christ, cannot iustly punish the again in vs: therfore, it must needs follow, that the miseries wherunto y children of God are subiect, are not punishments of their sins, but y Lord hath other ends for which he afflicteth them. Now the ends are many, but for order sake, we will refer the to three heads. Some of them are in respect of God, some in respect of vs, & some in respect of others. The end that God aimeth at in respect of himselfe, is twofold. First, therby to manifest & set forth his owne glory As our Saviour said cōcerning the man that was borne blind, that that affliction was laid vpon him,

Psal. 145. 17,

Gen. 18, 25

1, Pet. 2. 24

Non his puni-
tur in idem.

Iohn 9, 2, 3

him, neither for his owne sinnes, nor for his fathers sinnes, *but that the workes of God might be shewed on him.* And indeed no small glory redoundeth vnto God by the afflictions of his children. As the power of God is more magnified and declared in aduersitie, then euer it could be in prosperitie. For that which the Lord said to the *Apostle Paul* concerning outward afflictions, *My power is made persfite through weaknesse.* For when we are in prosperitie, & see no euill, we seeme not to stand need of Gods helpe. But when God deliuereth vs out of trouble, then is his power manifested, and then haue we occasion offered to glorifie him. As it is said in the *Psalme.* *Call upon me in the day of trouble and I will deliuer thee, and thou shalt glorifie mee.* Yea though the Lord for causes best knowne to himselfe, doe not deliuer his children out of their miseries and tribulations: yet this is no small matter of glory vnto him, that in the midst of them all he ministreth comfort vnto them, and maketh them cheerful, and

2. Cor. 12. 9

Psal. 50. 15

2. Cor. 3. 4.

1. Pet. 1. 8

and causeth them to reioyce with ¹⁰⁷
unspeakeable, and glorious.

Secondly to declare his anger and indignation against sinne, that when the wicked shall see that Gods dearest children, if they take libertie to sinne, doe not escape the rod, they may know what themselves are to looke for at his hands, according to that speech of the *Apostle Peter*, *If Iudgement first begin at the house of God, what shall bee the end of them that obey not the Gospell of God?*

1. Pet. 4. 17.

The ends that God aimeth at in respect of vs, are diuerse. First to correct and chasten vs for our faults. As the *Apostle* saith, *When we are indged, we are chastened of the Lord.* As a father that hath care of his childe, if he see him take euill courses, will correct him to bring him to amendment: so our most mercifull father will not suffer his children to continue in sinne, but vseth corrections to reclame them. Secondly, to try and exercise the graces that are in them, and to make them more conspicuous. Not as though the
Lord

1. Cor. 11. 32.

Heb. 12. 6.

Ioh. 2, 24, 25,

Job. 23, 10,

1, Pet. 1, 6, 7

Lord were ignorant of them. For he that made them, must needs know what is in them. And therefore, it is said of our *Saviour Christ*, that howsoever many professed to beleue in him; yet he did not commit himselfe vnto them, because he knew them all, and had no neede that any man should testifie of man, for he knew what was in man. But he doth it, that men may knowe themselves, and that it may appeare vnto others, what excellent things God hath wrought in them. Thus said *Job* of his afflictions, he knew they were no punishments of his finnes, as his friends would haue perswaded him, but tryals of his faith and patience. *He knoweth my way*, saith he, *and tryeth me, and I shall come forth like the gold.* And the *Apostle Peter* saith, that the children of God are in beauesse through manifold tentations, that the tryall of their faith, being much more precious then gold that perisbeth, might be found to their praise and honour and glory at the appearing of *Iesus Christ*. God will not suffer the graces of his children

children to lye idle and to rust in them, but by afflictions will exercise them and bring them to light. As Saint *Augustine* saith well. (a) Affliction is not a punishment of sinne, but a tryall of our vertue. And first, the faith of Gods children is hereby tryed and manifested. When a man is in no danger nor misery it is an easie matter for him to beleue, but when he groaneth vnder the burden of affliction, and seemeth euen to be quite forsaken of the Lord, then by the power of his faith to cry with *David*, *My God, my God*, and with *Iob*, *though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*, is a matter of great difficultie. Againe, their Christian courage appeareth. We thinke we are strong enough, till we be put to the trial. (a) As many vaine cowards in the midst of their cups, wil make great boast of their valor, but when they come into y^e field, they dare not looke the enemy in the face. *Seneca*, an heathen man, that neuer knew what y^e valor of a true *Christian* meant, could yet say of moral fortitude (a) y^e it withereth & becometh feeble if it

a Non est
paena crimi-
nis, sed virtu-
tis examen.
De Civ. Dei
lib. 4. cap. 3.

Psal. 22, 1.
Iob. 13, 15.
b Dulce bel-
lum in experi-
tis.
c Marcet sine
aduersario
virtus, Guber-
natorem in
tempestate, in
acie militem
intelligas. De
diuina prou-
dentia.

it haue not an aduersarie to encounter withall. The skill of a Pilot is best discerned in the greatest tempest, and the courage of a Soldier in the hottest skirmish. So the fortitude of a *Christian Soldier* appeareth most in the greatest and heaviest affliction. How can it bee knowne what courage a man hath to endure sicknesse and pouertie, &c. if he alwaies haue his health, and abound in riches. Moreouer their patience is by this means made knowne. *Patience* is a vertue which is alwayes necessarie for vs, but if it be not exercised we shall haue little vse of it. As when a sword is rusted in the sheath, a man may be wounded by his aduersary before he can draw it forth: so when patience is not tryed, the Deuill may wound a man to death, before hee be able to defend himselfe with it. Last of all, by this meanes their loue to God is most of all declared. It is not any thing worth for a man to loue God, when all things prosper with him, & succeed according to his owne desire. Now if a man should not loue
 God

God then, euen in the iudgement of the deuill, it were pittie of his life. For he could say when the Lord commended Iob. *Dost Iob feare God for naught? hast thou not made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on euery side? thou hast blessed the worke of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.* Nay he that shall onely loue God in this respect, may seeme to loue him for what will you giue me rather then for his owne sake? But he that cleaueth vnto God in the time of affliction, when all things goe crosse with him, that is a token of true loue indeed. Thus we see how the graces of Gods children are manifested in affliction, more then they could be in prosperity. As bricke if they be not thoroughly hardned in the fire, will by and by be dissolued; if they come into the water. So vnles the graces of Gods children be continually exercised, the least affliction that is will ouercome them. Spices neuer giue a sweeter smell, then when they are beaten to powder: so the graces of God

Iob, 1. 9. 10.

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Rom: 5. 3, 4.

a Non frangit in bonis perferendi tollerandique virtutem, nec eradicat ex animo pietatem, sed exercitiam facit foecundiorum.

De Civ. Dei lib. 1. ca. 13.

b Ignis afflictionis examinat, non extinguit, in Psal. 91. Scim 5.

Matth. 9. 12

in his children are neuer so fragrant & odoriferous, as whē they are as it were pounded by affliction, according to that speech of the *Apostle*, *Tribulation bringeth forth patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, &c.* Wherunto agreeth that saying of *S. August.* a Afflictio danteth not the patience & fortitude of them that be good, neither rooteth godlinesse out of their minds, but by exercising of it, maketh it more fruitfull. And that of *Bernard*, b The fire of affliction trieth the graces of the godly, but it doth not consume them.

Thirdly, the Lord afflicteth his children to prevent sin to come. There is in the best of vs such a masse of corruption, as that vpon euery occasion wee are apt and proane to fall into sinne: and therefore, for preventing thereof, it is necessary that the Lord should afflict vs. As a skilfull *Physition* many times prescribeth medicins to preterue from sickenes: so doth the Lord vse affliction to preterue his children from sinne. *They that be whole* (as our Sa-

niour

minor Christ saith) *neede not a Physiti-
on.* So, if wee were sound indeede, and
had no corruption in vs, we should
not neede to bee dealt withall in this
manner. But being corrupted and di-
stempred as wee are, wee stand neede
to bee purged and let bloud by affli-
ction.

Fouthly, by afflictions the Lord
doth giue vs some comfortable testi-
monie of the resurrection to a better
life. For seeing the godly are for the
most, in this life so euill intreated, they
may assure themselves, that in the life
to come, there shall be a blessed change
and alteration, wherein God shall wipe
away all teares from their eyes, and there
shalbe no more death, nor sorrow, neither
shall there be any more paine. But, they
that haue continued with Christ Iesus
in his tentations, shall haue a kingdome
appointed vnto them by him, that they
may eat & drink at his table in his king-
dome, &c. This is that which Abraham
told the rich glutton being in hel in tor-
ments, Son, saith he, remember that thou
in thy life time receiuedst thy pleasures,

Apoc. 21.4.

Lu. 22. 28, 29
30.

Luke 16. 25

and likewise Lazarus pains: now therefore
is he comforted, & thou art tormented.

Fiftly, by afflictions wee are made
conformable vnto Christ. For he was
not exempt from the Crosse, as one
saith wel. (4) God had one sonne with-
out sinne, but none without a affliction.
Though he were the author of eternall
saluation to al that obey him: yet he was
consecrate by afflictions. Yea albeit he
were the beloued Sonne of God, in whom
he is wellpleased: yet we see his Father
was so far from cockering and pampe-
ring of him, that we may truely say he
was not onely exercised with afflicti-
ons, whiles he was vpon the earth: but
his whole life was nothing else but a
continuell crosse. Why then should we
looke to be exempted from that con-
dition which Christ our head was to
vndergoe? especially seeing hee did
vndergoe it for our sakes, that in him-
selfe hee might giue vs an example of
patience. And therefore the Apostle
teacheth vs, that all the children of
God are predestinated to this end, that
they might be made like to the Image of
him.

a Deus filium
vnum habuit
sine peccato,
nullum sine
flagello.

Hebr. 5.9

Ma th. 2.17

Cal Institut.

lib. 3. cap. 8.

sect. 1.

Iohn 15.10

1. Cor. 1.22.23

1. Cor.

Rom. 8.29

him. In a word, by afflictions the Lord doth seale vnto vs the assurance of our adoption. For as the *Apostle* saith, *Whom the Lord loveth hee chasteneth, He. 11:6,7,8.* and he scourgeth every sonne that he receiveth. If yee endure chastening, God offereth himselfe vnto you as sonnes: for what sonne is it whom the Father chasteneth not? If therefore yee be without correction, whereof all are partakers, then are yee bastards and not sonnes. Where wee are taught, that wee can gather no greater testimony, that wee are the sonnes of God, than from the louing corrections which hee layeth vpon vs.

Last of all, there is a good end of our afflictions in respect of others. If wee be constant and couragious vnder the crosse, our example is a notable encouragement vnto others to treade in our steppes. If wee bee fearefull and faint-hearted, others may learne what frailty there is in man, and may thereby be moued to pittie vs, as if it were their owne case, as also to comfort vs, and to pray for vs: and to watch more

Rom. 8. 17

Hebr. 13. 3

2. Tim. 3. 12.

Acts 14. 22.

Vse 1.

Psal. 41 1.

carefully & diligētly ouer themselues. To conclude, the way to euerlasting glory, is by this meanes as it were chalked out. For hereby all men may see, that *Whosoener will liue godly in Christ Iesus, must suffer persecution*: and that *Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdome of Heauen*. And thus wee see the poynt is sufficiently cleared, that afflictions to Gods children are no punishments of their sins, but that the Lord sendeth them for many other good ends and purposes.

The vse of this Doctrine is very profitable. First, it serueth to teach euery one of vs, to *iudge wisely*, as *Dauid* saith, *of the poore, and those that are afflicted*. There is a corruption in our nature, which maketh vs rashly conclude, when wee see a man afflicted with some heauie crosse, that surely it is **GODS** iudgement vpon him for his sinne. So dealt the *Barbarians* with the *Apostle Paul*, when they sawe a *Viper* leape vpon him, and hang vpon his hand, they saide presently amongst themselues:

This

This man surely is a murderer, whom though hee have escaped the Sea, yet vengeance hath not suffered to live. Yea this corruption will euen creep into the best of vs all, if we do not endeavour to keepe it out. As wee see in Iobs friends, who though they were otherwise men of great knowledge, and (no doubt) godly: yet when they saw the strange afflictions that GOD had brought vpon him, they by and by, with one consent, passe their censure vpon him, That he was an hypocrite, and that GOD had now found him out. As Bildad telleth him plainly, that his sonnes had sinned against GOD, and therefore that hee had iustly sent them To the place of their iniquitie. And Zophar bids him know, that God had forgotten him for his iniquitie. Yea Eliphaz commeth to particulars with him. Is not (saith he) thy wickednes great, and shine iniquities innumerable? For thou hast taken the pledge from thy brother for nought, and spoiled the cloathes of the naked. To such as were weary, thou

D 4 hast

Acts 28.3,4,

Iob 8.4,

Iob 11.6.

and 22.5,6,
7,9.

Iohn 9.1.2

Lu. 13. 1, 2, 3,
4, 5.

hast not given water to drinke, and hast
 withdrawne bread from the hungry.
 Thou hast cast out widowes empty, and
 the armes of the fatherlesse were broken.
 And where we see, he is not afraid to
 charge Iob with oppression and vn-
 mercifulnes, as if these had beene the
 causes of his calamitie. And the Dis-
 ciples of our Saviour Christ, when
 they saw a man that was borne blinde,
 they straitway imagined, that it was
 either for his owne or his parents sins.
 But we must know, that euery crosse
 is not a pursuing of a man for sinne,
 as our Saviour teacheth in the Gospel,
 when he said to them that shewed him
 of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate
 had mingled with their owne sacrific-
 ces: Suppose yee, that these Galileans
 were greater sinners then all other Gali-
 leans, because they haue suffered such
 things. I tell you nay &c. Or thinke ye,
 that those eigheteene, upon whom the To-
 wer in Siloam fell and slew them, were
 sinners aboue all that dwelt in Ierusalem?
 I tell you nay, &c. And therefore, if a-
 ny of vs haue beene foolish this way,
 and

and haue thought wickedly and vn-
charitably of our brethren, when wee
haue seene them visited by the hand of
God, let vs learne henceforth, as *Salo-*
mon saith, to lay our hand vpon our
mouthes, *Pro* 30.32. lest we condemne
the generation of Gods children, *Psal.*
73.15. Saint *Augustine* hath a most
excellent saying to this purpose: Al-
though saith hee, the godly and the
wicked be alike afflicted, yet they are
distinct the one from the other, there
remaineth an vnlikenesse of the suf-
ferers, in the likenesse of their suffer-
ings. For, as vnder one and the same
fire, golde shineth and glistereth, and
chaffe smoaketh: and vnder one and
the same flaile, the strawe is broken in
pieces, and the corne is purged: ney-
ther are the lees therefore mingled
with the oyle, because they are strai-
ned out in one and the same presse: So
one and the same violence rushing vp-
on the godly and the wicked, tryeth,
purifieth and melteth the one, but it
damneth, destroyeth, and vtterly vn-
doeth the other. *b* So great a matter it

a Manet dif-
similitudo
pastorum in
similitudine
passionum.

b Tantum in-
terest, non
qualia, sed
qualis quis-
que patia ur:
De Ciu. Dei
is, lib. 1. cap. 8

is, not what things one suffereth, but how he is qualified that suffereth. For one and the same motion causeth the dung to stincke horribly, and the ointment to smell most sweetely: So that afflictions are like the red Sea, wherein the *Egyptians* were drowned, and the *Israelites* saued.

Vſe 2.

Secondly, it serueth to comfort all Gods children in the middest of the greatest afflictions that can befall them. It is the infirmitie and weaknes of our nature to thinke, that affliction is a token of Gods anger, and that if any extraordinary crosse doe befall vs, we presently feare that God hath forsaken vs. But as we heard already, though God afflict vs with many and heauie crosses, yet we are neuer the lesse deare vnto him, neyther doth hee loue vs any whit the lesse. An Heathen man, that neuer had experience of the loue of God to his children, had yet a glimmering of the trueth of this point. *Doſt thou not see, saith he, that fathers loue their children farre otherwise then mothers doe?*

They

a Seneca De
diuin. Prouid.

They would haue their children stirred
vp betimes to vndergoe labor & toile,
& cause them to sweat, yea sometimes to
weepe. But mothers desire to cherish
them in their bosoms, & to keep them
in couert & shelter: they would neuer
haue them weepe, they would neuer
haue them sad, they would neuer haue
them take paines. In like maner (saith
he) God hath a fatherly affection to-
wards good men, and loueth them not
effeminately, but manfully, and exer-
ciseth them with labors, with sorrows,
with losses, that so they may gather
true strength and hardnesse: So that
the greater that our afflictions are, the
better may wee be perswaded of the
loue of God: yea the more comfort
we may take in them. For God hauing
promised, that *Hee will not suffer vs to
be tempted aboue that wee are able:* we
may assure our selues that God seeth
wee haue strength to beare them, or
else he would not put vs to encounter
with the. When a *Captain* hath a piece
of seruice weighty and full of danger,
hee will not send a coward or a white-
liuered

1, Cor. 10. 13

liuered fellow about it, but hee maketh choice of those that are stoutest, and of whose valour and courage hee hath had most experience, and to them he committeth the charge of that business. So dealeth the Lord with vs. In his great wisdom and mercie hee proportioneth his afflictions; according to that measure of strength, which hee seeth in vs. When a *Physition* hath to deale with a Patient that is of a strong constitution, hee ministreth to him strong purgations: But if hee be weake and feeble, hee prescribeth for him milder potions. In like manner our heavenly *Physition* maketh the cup of our afflictions more bitter or more milde, as hee knoweth hee hath given vs ability to beare the same. And so long as hee strengtheneth vs by his glorious power, wee neede not care what crosses wee meete withall: for wee may be sure they shall not hurt vs. For, as so many rivers which daily do runne into the Sea, and such abundance of raine that falleth continually into it from the Cloudes, and such a multi-

Sen. de diuina
Prouid:

multitude of fountaines that spring from the middle of the earth, doe not change, no nor any whit abate or diminish the salt saour thereof: so the violence and force of afflictions doth not alter the minde of a violent man, but he abideth in his estate, and whatsoever befallerh, hee bringerh it into his owne colour. And on the contrarie side, there is no greater cause of discomfort, then when wee are altogether free from afflictions. And therefore one calleth a secure life, which is not subiect to crosses, the dead Sea, affirming, that when a man hath nothing to stirre him vp, and pricke him forward, nothing to trie the constancie and firmenesse of his minde, but lieth buried in idlenesse, it is not tranquillity but a dead calme.

Againe, this is no small argument of comfort, that God beholderh vs in all our troubles and afflictions, as it is said of the people of *Israel*, when they groand vnder the bondage of *Pharao*, that *God looked on them, and had respect vnto them*. Though they might thinke,

Non est tranquillitas, malicia est. Seneca epist. 68.

Exod. 2. 25

in

Exod. 3. 7.

8.

9.

Judg. 10. 19
zach. 2. 8

Psalme 56. 8

Malac. 3. 16

Exod. 2. 23

in regard of y^e miserable slavery which they indured, that God had quite forgotten them, and his promise made to them and their fathers : yet it was otherwise, his eye did still behold them. Neither doth the Lord looke vpon vs, as an idle beholder, or as one that taketh pleasure to see our misery, but with compassion and a tender regard. As hee saith in the former case, *I haue surely seene the trouble of my people which are in Egypt, and haue heard their cry, because of their task-masters, and I know their sorrows. Therefore I am come downe to deliuer them,* &c. And loe, the crie of the children of Israel is come vnto me, and I haue also siene the oppression, wherewith the Egyptians oppresse them. Where we see, that the Lord taketh to heart the afflictions of his children, *And his verie soule is grieved for their miserie,* and it goeth as neare him, as if a man should touch the apple of his eye. He regardeth their sighs and groans, and their *teares hee putteth in his bottell*: hee registreth their words and complaints, *There is a*
Booke

*Booke of remembrance written for them
that feare him, and all their cries come
up to him. It is true, that the Lord som-
times seemeth to forget & neglect his
children in the time of trouble. As our
Saviour Christ being in the ship with his
Disciples, was asleepe, till the ship was
couered with waues, and they were all
like to perish. When he heard that LA-
ZARUS his friend whom hee loued, was
sicke, he did not presently goe to visite
him, & to cōfort his sisters, but abode
stil two dayes in y place where he was,
so as LAZARUS was dead & buried be-
fore he came there. But when hee hath
sufficiently tryed & humbled them, he
returneth & speedily comforteth thē,
and so disposeth of their afflictions, as
hee alwayes enableth them to get the
victory. For, as they that had the o-
uerfight of the wraflings and com-
bates among the Hea:hen, did not suf-
fer the combatants to begin the con-
flict hand ouer head, nor arme them
confusedly, all alike: but making di-
ligent examination, as they saw mens
bodies and ages, they were carefull*

Iohn 11 6

Orig. de prin.
lib. 3. cap. 2.

to

to match like with like, and to furnish them with weapons fite for them : In like sort, the prouidence of God disposeth and ordereth after a most equal maner, all thole that descend into the conflicts of this life, so as one encountereth with the flesh, another with po- uerty, another with sickenes, another with infamy, another with persecuti- on: and putteth vpon euery one of the diuers kinds of armor, and furnisheth them with greater or lesser strength, as may inable them to ouercome the eni- my that is appointed for the. For God is not like the master of the games be- fore spoken of, who when hee hath ar- med the parties, departeth out of the wrastring place to behold the combat with the rest. But the Lord standeth by them still, and aideth and assisteth them at euery turne, and continually succoureth them that are weaker with greater strength.

And heerein the Lord dealeth with his children, as *Ioseph* dealt with his brethren when they came into *Egypt* to buy corne. For as *Ioseph* himselte was many

many wayes tried of the Lord, before he was made Ruler of the Land: so he likewise many wayes tryed and exercised his brethren before hee would make himselfe knowne vnto them, or acknowledge them to be his brethren. First, he tryed them, whether they had truly repented, and were touched with remorse for the iniury they had done to him, in that so cruelly and vnnaturally they solde him into *Egypt*: Secondly, hee tryed them, whether they had attempted any such thing against *Beniamin* his brother German, in that hee enioyned them to bring him with them the next time, that hee might see him: Thirdly, when they had brought him, hee shewed extraordinary kindenesse to him about the rest, giuing him fise times so great a portion as hee did any of them, and all to trie whether they did enuy him or no: Fourthly, he tryed them whether they loued their brother *Beniamin* so well, that when hee alone was detained, they would all for his sake come backe againe from their iourney.

E

Last

Genes. 43. 7.
et cetera ad
24.

Ibid. ver. 20

Gen 43. 34

Gen. 44. 1. et
cetera ad 14
and 33.

Ibid. verse 17,
et cet.

Gen. 42.24
and 43.30
and 45.1,2,3

Math 28.10
Heb. 2.14

Hos. 11.8

Iohn 14.21

Last of all, he tried them whether they loved their father so intirely, as y^e they would not return home without *Beniamin*, which they knew would be intollerable griefe vnto their father. All this while no doubt his brethren were in great perplexity & much troubled; and still *Ioseph* made as though he had not regarded them. But his bowels did earne within him towards them, and his heart was as much grieved as theirs, insomuch as twice he was constrained to turne from them and weep. And at the last he could refrain no longer, but he cried out, *I am Ioseph your brother*. So likewise *Christ Iesus* our blessed *Saviour*, who is not ashamed to call vs his *Brethren*, doth suffer vs to be exercised with many & grievous afflictions, and seemeth sometimes as though he cared not for vs: but yet in the meane while, his *repentings* are rolled together, and at the last, when he hath sufficiently tryed vs, hee will manifest himselfe vnto vs to our vnspeakeable comfort. According as himselfe saith, *Hee that loneth mee shall be loved of my father,*
and

and I will loue him, and will shew mine owne selfe to him : That is as one well noteth, I will loue him by trying his loue and patience, and when I haue tryed him, I will manifest my selfe vnto him. And though peraduenture this manifestation shall not bee by anie outward deliuerance in this life : yet at the day of Iudgement hee will acknowledge them openly in the sight of men and Angells. Then hee shall not be able to containe himselfe anie longer, but shall say vnto vs with a loude voyce, so as all the world shall heare. *I am Iesus your Brother, Come yee blessed of my Father, inherite the Kingdome prepared for you from the foundations of the world. Matt. 25.34.* For, as the Egyptians and all the house of Pharaoh heard the voyce of Ioseph, when hee reuealed himselfe vnto his Brethren, *Genes. 45. 2.* So in the day of Iudgement, when Christ shall manifest himselfe to his brethren, heauen and earth, and all the Angells in heauen shall heare his voyce : yea all the damned, & the whole house of hell

Wisd. 5. 3, 4, 5

shall heare it, and shall gnash their teeth for anger: and gnaw their tongues for griefe of heart to see those whom they sometimes had in derision, and in a parable of reprocach, whose life they thought to be madnes, and their end without honour, to be now counted among the children of God, and to haue their portion amongst the Saints.

1 Pet. 4. 14.

Finally, this is another argument of vnspokeable comfort to the children of God, that the greater their afflictions are, the greater shal their glorie be. As the *Apostle Peter* saith, *If ye be rayled upon for the name of Christ* (and it is true likewise of all other afflictions) *blessed are yee, for the Spirit of glorie, and of God resteth upon you.* And heereof we haue a worthy example in *Ioseph* before named. For, after the manifold and great calamities which he incured so many yeares, he was exalted by *Pharaoh*, and as himselfe confesseth, was made *Lord of all his house, and Ruler through all the land of Egypt.* And it is worthy to be noted, that

Gene. 45. 8

that for some thirteene yeares wherein he was afflicted, he was exalted, and ruled in *Egypt* for the space of fourescore yeares, as may easily be gathered out of the Story. For hee was seauenteene yeares olde, when his brethren solde him away: hee was thirtie yeares olde when hee was aduanced by *Pharaoh*: and he liued *Gouernour* of the land of *Egypt*, till hee were an hundred and ten yeares olde. Besides, such was the goodnesse of God vnto him, that for the seueral miseries which hee suffered, hee received a seuerall reward. For the hatred of his brethren hee obtained the fauour of the King and his Nobles. For the contempt and scorne which his brethren heaped vpon him, calling him *Dreamer*, &c. he was worshipped of them, with their faces downe to the ground. For the particoloured coate which they stript him of, when they cast him into the pit, he was arayed by *Pharaoh* with a princely roabe of fine linnen. In stead of the fetters wherewith he was bound in prison, *Pharaoh* put his own ring on

Gen. 37. 2

and 41. 46

and 50. 22.

Gen. 37. 19

and 42. 6

Gen. 37. 23

and 41. 42

his hand, and a chaine of golde about his necke. In steade of the prison and dungeon where he lay, he was set vpon the Kings best Chariot saue one, and carried in great pomp throughout the cittie. Whereas before he was contemned of all men, as a stranger, as a seruant and a prisoner, hee is now honored of all men, by bowing the knee at the Kings commaundement. In a word, in steade of his fathers house, from which he was exiled and banished, he had dominion in all the land of *Egypt*. So true is that saying euen of an heathen man, *The greater torment a man indureth, the greater shall be his glory afterwards.* But howsoeuer the Lord doth not alwayes deale thus with his children in this life: yet in the life to come, without all question, they shall finde the truth of that comfortable promise, deliuered by the *Apostle*, *Our light affliction which is but for a moment, causeth vnto vs a far more excellent and eternall weight of glorie.*

Thirdly, this Doctrin serueth to admonish vs, that seeing affliction is the

a quanto plus
tormenti, tanto
plus erit
gloriae.
Seneca de
diuin. Prouid.

2 Cor. 4. 17

Vse 3.

the lot and portion of Gods children in this life, that therefore wee should prepare for it before it come. The Lord will not haue his children come to Heauen in a pleasant way, that is strewed with rushes, as it were, but *through many tribulations wee must enter into his kingdome.* As Bernard saith well, a He is not meet for the crowne that is not yet prepared for the crosse. And therefore it is good for vs to arme our selues before hand, that when they come they may not hitte vs on the bare. Wee must bee carefull to store vp grace and comfort against a rainie day, that whatsoeuer shall befall vs, wee may bee provided to beare it. In our best estate, wee must put our selues in a readinesse to suffer aduersitie, whensoeuer GOD shall send it. In our greatest abundance, it is good for vs to thinke of want: in our prosperitie, it is good to looke for calamitie: and in our perfectest health to remember that sickenesse may come. There is nothing that maketh all affliction more bitter and grievous vnto

Act. 5. 14. 22

a Non est idoneus ad proemium, qui nondum paratus est ad patibulum.
De coena Dom. Ser. 6

a Si non quic-
quid fieri po-
test, pro futu-
ro habes, das
in te vires re-
bus aduersis,
quas infregi
quisquis prior
videt de tran-
quil. cap. 11
b Sapiens af-
fuescit futuris
malis, et quae
alii diu pati-
endo leuia fa-
ciunt, hic leuia
facit diu cogi-
tando. Epi. 77

vs, then because it taketh vs many times on the blind side, before we see it, or dreame of it. Whereas miserie that is fore-seene and premeditated, doth little hurt vs. Affliction is like the *Basiliske*, of which it is written, that if it see a man before hee see it, it killeth him; but if hee see it first, it hath no power to hurt him. So affliction is most terrible to those whom it findeth vnprepared. *Seneca*, though an Hea-then man, hath spoken well to this purpose: a If (saith hee) thou doest not make account, that whatsoever can befall, may come vnto thee, thou giuest aduersitie power and strength against thee, which, whosoever seeth first, hath weakened and abated. And in an other place: b A wise man accustometh himselfe to future cuills, and those things which other men make easie by long suffering, hee maketh easie by foreseeing.

Fourthly, it teacheth vs to be patient in all the afflictions that God layeth vpon vs, because they are his louing corrections, in regard of our daily falls
and

and infirmities. We may not say with *Iob*, *Oh that my griefe were well weighed, and my miseries were layd together in the ballance : For it would now bee heauier then the sand of the Sea. And my woundes grienous without my sinne :* But rather acknowledge, that we haue deserued farre greater punishment, as *Dauid* saith, *If thou Lord straitly markest our iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand ?* If God should deale with the best of vs according to our deserts, we were neuer able to abide it. And therefore as *Bernard* saith well, *a* It is good for vs to beare the rodde of correction, lest we feele the hammer of confusion. The more wee struggle and striue vnder the hand of God, the lesse we preuaile, and the more we prouoke him to displeasure, & cause him to vse harder courses against vs. As a father, hauing an vnruely sonne, that will not take correction, binds him to a forme. But the sooner wee yeelde and submit our selues to his will, and kisse his rod, the sooner we shall be deliuered.

Last of all, it serueth to reprocue the
pro-

Iob 6.2,3

and 34.6

Psalme 130.3

a Sustinete
virgam corripi-
entem, ne
sentiat mal-
leum conte-
rentem. In ps.
91. serm. 9

Vse 5:

Mal. 3. 14. 15

Jerem. 12. 1

profane wretches of the world, who insult ouer the children of God in their miseries: and doe not sticke blasphemously to say, *What profite haue these holy fellowes by keeping Gods commandments, or by walking humbly before the Lord of Hostes? Wee neuer regarded Gods seruice, but haue wrought wickednesse, and tempted GOD all our liues, and yet we are set vp and deliuered. Wee haue rebelliously transgressed, euen from our cradles, and yet our wayes doe prosper, and we haue wealth at will.* But let all such vngodly persons know, first, that it is a grieuous sinne, to adde affliction to those that are in miserie. For howsoeuer God do many times seuerely correct those that transgresse his Lawe, though they be neuer so deare vnto him, yet hee will not allow the wicked to insult ouer them, no more then a father that whip-peth his sonne for his faults, will suffer his seruants spitefully to taunt and reproach him. Againe, the children of God, though they walke neuer so uprightly before the Lord, yet their reward

ward is not in this life. *It doth not yet
appeare what they shall be.* But there is a
crowne of righteousness laid up for them
against the day of Iudgement: & when
Christ which is their life shall appeare,
then shall they also appeare with him in
glory. And for themselves, though their
prosperitie bee neuer so great for the
present, yet it is inconstant, & shall not
indure. The Lord setteth them in slipperie
places, & casteth them down into desola-
tion, & sodainly are they destroyed, peri-
shed and horribly consumed. For euen in
the midst of their wealth, they are but
fatted & prepared for the day of slaugh-
ter. And thus much shall suffice for the
first point, which I haue the longer insi-
sted on, because it is so necessary for vs.

It is good that I was afflicted.) This
must be vnderstood of crosses that are
sanctified, when GOD giueth grace
to make an holie vse of them. It is
true, affliction in it owne nature, is e-
uill, and a tag of Gods vengeance, &
a punishment for sin. But, as the bitter
waters, which the Israelites complay-
ned of in the wildernesse, were made
sweete

1 Iohn 3.2

2 Tim. 4.8

Coloss. 3.4

Psalme 73.18

Ierem. 12.3

Exod. 15.25

a Non poe-
na, sed reme-
dium delin-
quentium.
Psal. 94. 12.

Heb. 12. 11:

sweet by a tree, which *Moses* by Gods direction cast into them: to the Crosse of *Christ* hath seasoned and sweetened all afflictions to the children of God, which haue grace to profite by them: so that now the nature of them is changed and altered, that they are no more a punishment of sinne, but a medicine for the sinner. According to that excellent speech of *Dauid*, *a Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him in thy Law*. If the Lord do ioyne his teaching to his correction, to cause a man wisely to make vse thereof, it is a most happy and blessed condition. Wherevnto agreeth that saying of the *Apostle*, *No chastising for the present seemeth to bee ioyous, but grienous: but afterwarde it bringeth with it the quiet fruit of righteousness, vnto them which are thereby exercised*. If a man be truely exercised with affliction, hee shall finde great fruit and benefite by it. So then heere wee are taught, that affliction is very profitable and good for the children of God. That God, who by his mighty power

com-

commanded the light to shine out of
darkenesse, hath so ordered the mat-
ter in his heauenly wisdom, that e-
uen those things, which to mans na-
ture, and to flesh and bloud, are most
irkesome and wearisome, should bee
to his children most beneficiall and
wholesome. For (as the *Apostle* saith)

2 Cor. 4.6

All things worke together for the best
unto them that loue God. In that hee
saith, *all things*, hee excepteth no-
thing. Not onely prosperity but ad-
uersity also, not onely good successe,
but losses and casualties: not health
onely but sickenes: not life but death
also, make for the good of those that
be godly. And indeed, affliction doth
not only minister comfort vnto them,
in that, as we haue heard, it is a pledge
of their adoption, but it produceth al-
so many blessed and gracious effects.

Rom. 8.28

First of all, it is a means to purge
out the drosse of that naturall corrup-
tion that is within vs. So long as wee
enioy prosperity, it is with vs as the
Prophet saith of *Moab*, wee are like
Wine that is setled on his lees, and fro-

Jerem 48.11
Zephan. 1.12

zen

a Si aurum es,
per ignem
purgaris: si
ferrum es, ru-
biginem a-
mittis;

zen in his dregges, and hath not bene
powred out from vessell to vessell. So wee
are full of the dregges of naturall cor-
ruption, till the Lord by affliction
doe refine vs. Affliction (as one saith
well) is vnto the children of God, as
the flaile is to the corne, the file to the
yron, and the fire to the golde: *a* As
the flaile doth purge the corne from
the chaffe, which groweth vp with it:
and as the file scowreth off the rust that
sticketh vpon the yron: and as the
fire putifieth the gold from the drosse:
So doth affliction, by Gods mercie,
purge away from vs that chaffe, that
rust, and drosse of sinne, that is in our
nature. The Gold-smith taketh not
the golde out of the forge, till hee see
it well and thoroughly purified. In like
manner, God doth not remooue the
afflictions of his children, till they
be thoroughly refined. In a word, af-
fliction is the Lordes pruning knife,
whereby he cutteth away from vs all
withered and vnprofitable branches.

Secondly, affliction that is sancti-
fied, doth bring a man to the sight of
his

his finnes, and to godly sorrow, and true repentance for the same. *a* As sinne shutteth vp a mans eyes, so affliction openeth them. And heereof we haue a worthy example in the brethren of *Ioseph*. For the space of twentie yeares they were neuer touched with any remorse, for their vnnaturall cruelty, in selling of him to the *Ishmaelites*: till at the last, comming into *Egypt*, to buy corne, in the time of the famine: and perceiuing *Ioseph* to speake roughly to them, and to charge them to be Spies, that came to see the weakenesse of the Land: and fearing imprisonment, or some other hard measure, then they beganne to call their sinne to remembrance, and to say one to another, *Wee haue verely sinned against our brother, in that wee sawe the anguish of his soule when he besought vs, and we would not heare him: therefore is this trouble come vpon vs.* *Genesis 42.21.* As one that is fast asleepe, will not awake vnlesse hee be raised by thrusting, or by some such violent motion: so many lie snorting

a Oculos
quos culpa
claudit, poe-
na aperit.
Greg. in Mo-
ral.

Jerem. 8. 6.

snorting in the long custome of sinne, and neuer thinke of repentance, till the hand of God be vpon the. And as the horse that russeth into the battell, neither feareth the enemy that commeth against him, nor is terrified with the dolefull groanes of dying persons, nor with the noyse of the gunnes, nor with the shaking of the pikes : so wicked men are carried headlong to sinne, and neither feare the roaring of the diuell, nor are moued with the miserable end of others before their eyes, nor terrified with the feare of hell. But as the horse running with violence, being checked by his rider with a sharpe bridle, is enforced to stay his course. So, when sinners runne into all excesse of riot, the Lord in mercie, by one affliction or other, as it were by strong hand, pulleth them backe, and causeth them to see their finnes, and so bringeth them to repentance. So that wee see that God vseth his corrections as Sermons, to call his children from their finnes, which many times are more forcible and effectuell then any verball

verball preaching. According to that saying of *S. Augustine*, a Many men when they feele the smart, reforme the falt. Now what greater benefite can there be then this for a man to be brought to vnfained repentance for his sins, without which there can be no hope of forgiuenes. And therefore *Bernard* saith sweetely. *b* It is a good affliction, that bringeth a man to compunction, and remorse.

Thirdly, affliction is as a notable meanes to humble the children of God, and to beate downe their pride. So long as all things goe well with vs, and we are free from the crosse, our flesh is puffed vp, and can hardly be kept vnder, the leuen of old *Adam* is in vs, and maketh vs swell in pride. As the moone neuer suffereth eclipse, but when she is in the full, and then she is alwayes furthest distant from the sun: so likewise when we abound in outward prosperitie, such is the foolish pride of our hearts, we are puffed vp, and care least for God, till by some affliction or other he humble vs and

F bring

a Multi cum
sentiant poe-
nam, corri-
gunt culpam,
in Psal. 50:

b Bene pun-
geris, si com-
pungeris, in
Psal. 32.

Luc. 17. et c.

Gen. 16. 4, 9

Psal. 30. 6, 7.

Pressura caruit, tumor excreuit, Aug. in Psal. 51.

bring vs downe. Thus was it with the *Prodigall son*. As soone as hee had got his portion of his father, he was all on flaunt, & knew not himselfe, hee could stand on no ground: but when he had wasted his substance, and was pinched with pouerty and famine, his pride was danted, & hee was glad to come home by weeping crosse. So was it with *Hagar* when she had conceiued a child by her master *Abraham*, she was presently so lifted vp with pride, that she despised her mistris *Sara*, because shee was barren. But afterwards, when her mistris had dealt roughly with her, and made her run away into the wildernes, she cried *peccavi*, and humbled herselfe vnder her hands. Yea *Dauid* himselfe, though otherwise an holy man, had a spice of this disease, as himselfe confesseth, *In my prosperitie* (saith he) *I said I shall neuer be mooued. For thou Lord of thy goodnes hadst made my mountaine to stand strong.* See how loone a man is apt to forget himselfe, if hee enioy but a litle prosperitie. But alas, the case was soone altered with him. For as he saith

saith in the next words, *The Lord did but hide his face*, and bring him into some affliction, and straitway hee *was troubled*. And therefore, in this respect affliction is very necessary and profitable, because it causeth a mā to know himselfe. As we see by common experience, when God afflicteth a man eyther with ignominy and disgrace in his name, or with povercy in his estate, or with sickenes in his body, or with losse of children, or any such like crosse and calamity, though before hee were neuer so proud, and carried himselfe neuer so high, yet then he beginneth to droope, and letteth his feathers fall. *a Antigonus*, though an heathen king, when he was taken with a little sicknesse, and had recouered thereof, he could make this good construction of it, namely, that it was well for him that hee had beene sicke and ill: for his disease had taught him, that seeing hee was but a mortall man, hee should not too much lift vppe his Spirit. And this is the goodnesse of God towards vs, as Saint *Augustine*

F 2

saith,

a Plut in A-
potheg. Reg;
et Imp.

a August. de
vera Relig.

saith, That because the sweetnesse of earthly blessings doth deceiue vs and puffes vs vp, we should be humbled by the bitternes of affliction.

Prou. 22. 15

Fourthly, affliction is a meanes to reforme the godly, and to make them better: That which *Salomon* speaketh of children, is true also of aged persons, that *follie is bound in their hearts, but the rodde of correction shall drive it away from them.* And therefore, the

1 Cor. 11. 32

Apostle saith well, That when GOD correcteth & chasteneth his children, it is but to *Nurture* them (as a louing father doth his sonne) for their reformation and amendment. *When we are indged,* saith he, *we are nurtered of the Lord, &c.* The Lord knoweth, that a sonne let at libertie, runneth into such licentious courses, that he is a shame to his father, and a grieue to his mother, and therefore hee will not suffer his children whom hee loueth most tenderly, to goe on in their sinnes, lest his name should be dishonoured, and his holy Gospel euill spoken of, but by corrections and crosses laboureth to reclaime

reclaime them. As *Iob* saith, *Hee openeth the eares of men, euen by their corrections which he hath sealed: That hee might cause man to turne away from his enterprife, &c.* And *Solomon* hath a speech to the same purpose, that corrections for instruction are the way of life, to keepe and preferue a man from whooredome, and such like sinnes: a So that this (as *Bernard* saith) must needes be a happy and blessed affliction, that maketh a man better.

Fifely, affliction is an excellent means to inforce vs, and stirre vs vp to prayer. Yea, euen they that neuer thought to pray, as *Atheists*, and wicked persons, when any trouble lyeth vpon them, are driuen to pray whether they will or no. As the *Prophet* saith, That such as rebell against God, in the time of famine, when they want corne and wine, will howle vpon their beds. And *Danid* reckoneth vp a bead-roll of such persons. Some that wandered out of the way in the wilderness, and found no citty to dwell in, both hungry & thirsty, their soule fainting in them. Others that

Iob 33.16,17

Prou. 6.23.

a Felix necessitas quae cogit in melius. De praecepto et dispensat.

Hosea 7.14

Psal. 107.4,5

10.

18.

26:

Verse 6. 13,
19, 28

Jonah 1. 5

and 3. 8
2 Chro. 33. 6
2 Kin. 21. 16.

*dwell in darkenesse and in the shadow of death: that is, poore prisoners, being bound in misery and yron. Others being cast on their sicke beds, whose soule abhorreth all maner of meate, and they are brought to deaths doore. Others in danger of shipwracke, whose soule melteth for trouble, &c. Howsoever peradventure in the time of their prosperity, they cared but alittle for the Lord, yet now they cryed to him in their trouble, & he deliuered them out of their distresse: So that trouble and distresse will make any man cry vnto the Lord, and betake him to his prayers. So was it with the mariners that entertained *Jonah*, when they were afraid of their liues, by reason of the mightie tempest that God sent vpon them, they cried *euery man to his God*. And the proud king of *Ninueh*, with all his people, when they heard the sodaine destruction that was threatned against the by the preaching of *Jonah*, they cried mightily vnto God. And that wicked *Manasseh*, who did very much euill in the sight of the Lord to anger him: shedding innocents*

cent blond exceeding much, till hee replenished Ierusalem from corner to corner: yet when God brought vpon him the Captaines of the King of *Assur*, which tooke him, and put him in fetters, and bound him in chaines, and carried him to *Babel*, then when he was in tribulation, he prayed to the Lord his God, and humbled himselfe greatly before the God of his fathers. Yea the godly themselves are neuer so fit to pray, as when they are in affliction. Though they be carefull to pray continually: yet they neuer pray with so great deuotion and seruencie, as when some heauy crosse or calamity is vpon them. For then feeling their miserie, and their owne inabilitie to helpe themselves, they more earnestly flie vnto the Lord for succour. As the Prophet saith, *In that day, that is, in the day of trouble, shall a man looke to his maker, and his eyes shall looke to the holy one of Israel. And in their affliction they will seek me diligently,* saith the Lord. In our prosperity wee are all of vs both good & bad, too full of security, as thogh we

1 Theff. 5. 17.

Esa 17. 7.

Hosea 5. 15.

Ierem. 22. 21

Pſalm 10. 4, 5

Ierem. 2. 24

stood no neede of God. As the Lord complaineth of *Ieconiah* saying, *I spake to thee when thou wast in prosperity : but thou saidst, I will not heare &c.* And so *David* saith of the wicked, that because his wayes alway prosper, and the iudgements of God are high above his sight : therefore he is so proud, that hee neuer seeketh after God. And the Prophet *Ieremiah* compareth such persons to the wilde *Ass* in the wildernesse, that snuffeth up the winde at her pleasure: and it is in vaine to seeke to turne her backe, but in her moneth, that is, in her foaling time, then a man may deal with her. As the little Chickens, when the weather is faire, and there is no danger towardes, straggle a great waie from the Henne : but if any Hayle shewer come vpon them, or a Kite houer ouer them, then they are glad to runne vnder her wings for shelter. And as the Stagge, when he is at liberty, will not come neare a man : but when hee is hotly pursued with the dogges, hee will runne to him of his owne accord for succour : So it fareth often.

oftentimes with vs, when wee are at ease, and nothing doth molest vs, wee turne our backs vpon GOD: but when wee are brought into distresse or danger, we are glad to repaire vnto him for helpe. As one confesseth of himselfe (and it is our case aswell as his) *¶* If I could be well without thee, I would neuer come at thee. As the water when it is at large, and hath scope enough, runneth with a still and silent motion, but being brought into a streight, it maketh a great noyse: In like manner, when a man is at large, he looketh not much to this ductie of prayer: but when hee is in affliction and straites, hee will excite and stirre vp himselfe thereunto. So did the children of *Israel*, in the time of their bondage, they *sighed, and cryed, and made their moane vnto GOD.* And wee reade in many places of the Booke of *Iudges*, That howsoeuer in their prosperity they were vntoward & carelesse of God, yet when God raised vp any new enemies against them, they cryed vnto him. And *David* saith
of

*Si bene es-
sem sine te,
non venirem
ad te.*

Exo. 2:23, 24

Chap. 3. and 4

Psal. 30. 8

Mar. 1. 35

Heb. 5. 7

Luke 22. 44

of himselfe, that although before, while he thought his mountain to be strong enough (as we haue heard) he was foolish and prowd: yet when God hid his face from him, then hee *cryed vnto the Lord and praied vnto him.* And we may obserue, that the most of his *Psalmes* were made when hee was in affliction. Yea our *Sauior Christ* himselfe, thogh all his life time hee was much conuersant in prayer, sometime rising early in the morning before day, and sometime spending the whole night therein: yet he neuer prayed more earnestly, nor more feruently, then immediately before his passion: when, as the *Apostle* saith, *he offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and teares:* yea he was so feruent, that *his sweat was like droppes of bloud trickling downe to the ground.* Wee see then by all that hath beene spoken, that affliction is as it were a whet-stone, to set an edge vpon our deuotion, and sharpen our hearts to prayer.

Sixtly, affliction doth containe the children of God in obedience. It is with

with the best of vs, as *Agiselaus* said of the *Athenians*; that a When they were at libertie they were nought, but when they were in bondage, they were good: so we in our prosperity do start aside like a broken bow, but when affliction commeth, wee submitte our selues to the Lords yoke. The people of *Israel*, when the hand of God was vpon them, eyther by warre, or famine, or any other calamity, carried themselves very religiously, and walked in obedience vnto his will. But when God carryed them vp to the high places of the earth (as *Moses* saith) that they might cate the fruites of the fieldes: when hee caused them to sucke hony out of the stone, & oile out of the hard rocke: when hee gaue them butter of kine, and milke of sheepe, with fatte of lambes and rammes fed in *Bashan*, with the fatte of the graines of wheate: and made them drinke the red liquor of the grape: then they that should haue beene upright, when they waxed fatte, spurned with their heeles: they were fat, they were grosse, they were laden with fatnesse: there-

a Liberi mali-
tunt, serui
bont.

Deut. 32.13,
14.18

Psal. 119. 67

Ierem. 31. 13

Psal. 49. 20

Hosea 2. 6

therefore they forsooke God that made them, and regarded not the strong God of their saluation. And this doth Dauid confesse of himselfe, when he saith, *Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep thy word.* And the Church acknowledgeth, that before the Lord corrected her, *shee was like an untamed calfe.* Though man were created after the Image of God, and aduanced to great honour, yet if God let him alone, hee will become like vnto the beasts that perish, as Dauid saith. And therefore, the Lord threatneth the rebellious Iewes, that *he will stoppe their way with thornes, and make an hedge, that they should not finde their pathes.* Where hee sheweth that necessitie requireth, that hee shou'd holde them in with seuerer Discipline and sharpe corrections, comparing them to wanton and vnruly cattell, which must bee kept in with thornes and hedges, lest they leape out of the pasture, and goe astray.

Seauenthly, it helpeth to tame and subdue the vnrulinesse of the flesh, that
it

it may be in better subiection to the Spirit. The flesh is like an head-strong horse, which if he be fatted and pampered in the stable for a while, waxeth so frampall, as hee can hardly be ruled, and brought to acknowledge his rider: So this stubborne flesh of ours, if it inioy but a litle prosperity, it straitway groweth so rebellious, that it will not be *subiect to the Law of God*. And as the horse-rider, to pull downe the stomacke of such an horse, taketh away his prouender, and feedeth him with straw and chaffe: and if that will not serue, handleth him roughly, and beateth him. So doth the Lord with our flesh: hee taketh away those outward blessings which puffed it vp, and made it swell, and loadeth it with one affliction after another, that so he may *beate it downe and bring it into subiection*. And this is a great benefite, to haue the flesh, with the cursed lustes and affections thereof, mortified and subdued in this maner. For it is one of those deadly enemies of our soules, with which we must fight and incoun-

Rom. 8. 7

1 Cor. 9. 27

Galat. 5. 17

ter

ter while we liue. Now as he that were to enter a single combate, with an aduersary that were stronger then himselfe, would be glad of some bodie would first weaken and foyle him, that so he might the more easly ouercome him : In like manner, the children of God haue cause to reioyce, that it doth please the Lord by outward calamities to tame the flesh, and to treade it vnder their feete, that so they may with lesse difficulty and danger get the mastery of it.

¶ Eightly, it is a meanes to withdraw our hearts from the loue of the world, & to raise them vp to the desire of heavenly things. Such is the corruption of our nature, that we deate too much on this world. We are like to foolish children, that would not willingly be weaned from the breast, and therefore their mother annoynteth the nibbles of her breast with some bitter thing, to make them out of loue with it. So, if wee might haue our wills, wee would alwayes hang vpon the breasts of the world, & would neuer leaue sucking,
if

if the Lord did not powder our desires with the crosse, and make them bitter to vs. The children of *Israel*, though they were grieuouſly afflicted in *Egypt*, to make them more earnestly desire to possesse the land of *Canaan*: yet we see how hardly they were brought to depatt from thence. Yea, when they were in the way to *Canaan*, they would often haue returned backe againe into *Egypt* to their *flesh-pots*, *their fish*, *their cucumbers*, *their peppons*, &c. If they had liued in preferment there, and enioyed the fatte of the land, as they did in *Iosephs* time, it would, no doubt, haue beene an hard matter to haue perswaded them to depart. So it fareth with the most of vs: wee are in this world, as in a Sea of misery, neuer out of one danger or other, yet such is our folly, we loue to be here still. What would we do if we neuer had any thing to molest vs? It is a lamentable thing to consider that our mindes should bee so dazeled with the glittering shew of riches, pleasures & honors, as they cannot look to heauē, that

our

Num. 14. 3, 4
Exod. 16. 3
Num. 11. 5

Gen. 45. 18
and 47. 11

Caluin. insti.
lib. 3. cap 9.
sect. 1.

our hearts should be so oppressed and weighed downe with couetousnes and ambition, that they can not raise vp themselves vnto celestiaall cogitations, and that our soules should be so ensnared with the pleasant inticements of the flesh, that they seeke for their felicitie vpon the earth. And therefore the Lord in mercy to preuent this euill, doth by daily experience of miseries, put his children in minde of the vanity of all earthly things, lest they should promise to themselves a constant and continuall peace in this world, hee suffereth them many times to bee disquieted and molested, with warres, with tumults, with robberies, and other injuries: lest they should with too much greedines gape after brittle and inconstant riches, or should too much rest in those which they doe possesse, God bringeth them to pouerty, sometimes by banishment, sometimes by barrennes of the earth, sometimes by fire, sometimes by one meanes, and sometimes by another, lest they should take too much delight in the comfortes of

mar-

marriage, he eyther causeth them to be vexed with the shrewdnesse of their wyues, or humbleth them with lewd children, or afflicteth them with the losse and death of their children. And if it fall out that the Lord doe spare them in all these things: yet, lest they should either swell with vaine-glorie, or reioyce with foolish confidence, he chasteneth them with sickenesse and diseases, that they may learne how fraile and vnstable all earthly things are, and may lift vp their eyes to heauen, where that incorruptible crowne of glory is laid vp for them. And thus the Lord in his vnspeakeable goodnes many times diminisheth the health of our bodies, that we may more earnestly desire the saluation of our souls. He taketh away the things of this life, that we may more carefully seeke after the things of a better life. So that afflictions are like to a great storme at Sea, to make the godly wish to be in the hauen. As the waters of the deluge, the more they increased, the higher they bare vp the Arke: So the waters

Philip. 1. 23

a Per flagella
domini iper-
nuntur te re-
na, amantur
coelestia.
De coena
dem. ferm 10
b Diog. La-
ertius in vita
Zenonis.

of tribulation, the greater they are, the higher they lift vp the soule towards heaven: according to that speech of *Bernard*, a By the Lords corrections we contemne earthly things, and loue heauenly. And therefore, as *Zeno* b ha- uing suffered shipwracke, became the Scholler of *Crates*, and studied *Philosophie*, and after said it was an happie shipwracke that made him affect such excellent knowledge: So may wee say much more truly It was a blessed sick- nes, a blessed pouerty, a blessed impri- sonment &c, that caused vs to looke towards the kingdome of heaven.

Ninthly, affliction doeth saue the children of God from hell & condem- nation. If God should let vs alone, we would neuer rest till we run headlong to hell: as foolish childrē, if they be not hinderd, will run into the ditch. And therefore, it is the Lords mercie, to lay the rodde vpon our backs, that so we may bethinke our selues of the danger wherein wee stand, and may labour to preuent it. And this is that which *Iob* saith, that the Lord openeth the eares of

Iob 33 16. 18

men by corrections, that so he may keepe
backe their soules from the pit, and that
their life should not passe by the sword.
And the *Apostle* hath a saying to the
same purpose, that when we are indged
we are chastened of the Lord because we
should not be condemned with the world.

Cor. 11. 32.

When a man is desperately about to
cast himselfe into the fire, or to drowne
himselfe in the water, can any do him
a greater benefite then to preuent him
and saue his life? So there cannot be a
greater benefite to vs, then when we are
ready to drowne our selues in perdition
by our sinnes, that the Lord by his
corrections should stay vs, and holde
vs backe.

Last of all, affliction doth fitte
and prepare vs for the kingdome of
Heauen. As the *Apostle* saith of the
Thessalonians, that by persecutions and
tribulations which they suffered, they
were counted worthy of the kingdome
of God. 2. *Thess.* 1. 5 As the parching
heat of the Sun ripeneth the corne, and
maketh it fitte to bee carried into the
barn: so doth affliction ripen the godly,

Apocal. 21. 27

Prou. 25. 4

2 Tim. 2. 21.

1 Kings 6. 7

that they may be meet to be gathered into Gods barne. And this is done two wayes: First, because by afflictions as wee haue heard; wee are purged and purified from our sins, which else would hinder vs from comming there. For *no uncleane thing shall enter into Gods kingdomes*. As gold must first be purified in the fire, before it be laid vp in the kings treasury: & as wheat must be cleansed from the chaffe, before it be laid vp in the garner: so must it be with vs. Affliction is the fire that must purge vs, to make vs *vessels of honour* for the house of God: and the fan that must clense vs, to make vs pure wheat for his garner. In the building of *Solomons temple*, all the stones were hewen and fitted in the quarry, before they were brought thither: and *There was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of yron heard in the temple while it was in building*. So in the kingdome of heauen, which is the spirituall house of God, all the *living stones* thereof, must be hewen, and squared, and fitted by afflictions in this life. Secondly,
afflict.

affliction prepareth vs for heauen, because it is a meanes to worke holines in vs, *without which no man shall ever see the Lord*, as the *Apostle* saith. We see then by all these gracious effects and blessed fruits which affliction bringeth with it, that *Dauid* had good cause to say, *It is good for mee that I haue bene afflicted*. And therefore wee may conclude with Saint *Augustine*, a The Lord smiteth vs that hee may heale vs, and killeth vs that wee may not die from him.

This Doctrine (that wee may make some vse of it) doth teach vs, first of all, to labour to perswade our selues of this great and excellent good that affliction bringeth with it, that so we may count it *exceeding ioy when we fall into it*. I confesse it seemeth otherwise to flesh and bloud. For, as the *Apostle* saith truly, *no chastising for the present seemeth to be ioyous, but grievous*. As children are loath to feele the smart of the rodde, nay, they can not indure to heare of it; so is our corrupt nature loath and vnwilling to taste of

Heb. 12. 14

a Percutis, vt
santes et oc-
cidis nos, ne
moriatur abs-
te. confess.
lib. 2.

Vlc 1.

James 1. 2

Heb. 12. 11:

Psalme 73. 14.

and 10. 5.

and 107. 18.

Iob 7. 13:

4.

Iob 6. 6.

Heb. 2. 14.

Matt. 26. 38
39.a Ser in feria,
5. in Parasc.

any correctiō. It is death to vs, to hear that we must be *punished & chastened every morning*: and that we must be fed *with the bread of tears, & have tears to drinke in great measure*. It is a wearisome thing to be alwayes sicke & languishing, so as *the soule abhorreth all maner of meate*: to be continually full of cramps & aches and pains, so as neither a mans couch can relieue him, nor his bed bring comfort vnto him, as Iob saith. But when he layeth him downe, he saith, *when shall I rise, and the night bee gone?* and, *he is full with tossing to and fro vnto the dawning of the day*. The like may be said of all other afflictions, they are as vnfauoury to the flesh, as *the white of an egge without salt*. And therefore our Saviour Christ himselſe, as he was man, and so partaker of our infirmities, felt in his flesh a loathnesse to haue tasted of that bitter cup of his Palsion, *his soule was heuie vnto the death*, and therefore hee besought his Father, that *if it were possible it might passe from him*: a which speech, as Bernard noteth, seemeth to be the speech of

of the flesh, & not of the spirit, because he addeth a little after, *the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.* But we must not measure afflictions by the present smart we feele in them, but by the benefit that follows after them. For as we haue heard, though the sense of the present griefe be bitter, yet the fruit that commeth after is most sweet and pleasant. Affliction is to the soule, as *Physicke* to the body. But as commonly that *Physicke* which is most wholesome, is withall most vntootherfull: so that affliction which is most profitable, is for the most part most distastefull. As the plant which they call *Christs thorne*, is extreme bitter both in the root and in the leaues, & in the branches; but yet is very medicinable (for the iuyce of the root cleareth the eyes, the seede bringeth downe the after-birth, &c.) So affliction, though it be in it selfe most bitter and vnsauoury, yet the Lord our most skillfull *Physician*, maketh most soueraigne medicines thereof, to *heale the infirmities* of his children, whereby it becommeth more profitable to them

Plin. lib. 24.
cap. 14.

Psal. 103. 3.

then (by reason of their corruption) prosperitie could euer be. For as dead flesh, if it be kept in sweete water, will corrupt and be full of wormes : but if it be kept in salt brine, it will be preserved long, and become wholesome meate for the vse of man : so the children of God, if they abound with prosperity, are easily corrupted, but being exercised by the crosse, they are preserved from the infection of sinne.

Secondly, it teacheth vs to indeuour by all meanes, to profite by the afflictions that God layeth vpon vs, that so we may haue experiēce of this good which they bring with them: that seeing God intendeth them for our benefite, so wee may not by our owne stubbornnesse and vntowardnes, peruert them to our hurt. It is as grieuous a sinne as we can commit, to harden our hearts when Gods hand is vpon vs. As the Lord complained of the *Jewes*, *I haue smitten your children in vaine, they haue receiued no correction.* And in an other place. *O Lord (saith the Prophet) Thou hast stricken them,*
and

Jerem. 2. 30.

and 5. 3.

and they haue not sorrowed : thou hast consumed them, but they haue refused to receiue correction : they haue made their faces harder then a stone, and haue refused to returne . And so it is said of Ahaz, that in the time of his tribulation hee did trespassse more against the Lord. Let vs therefore blesse our selues from this height of iniquitie, and let vs pray to God, to sanctifie all our corrections and chasticements vnto vs, that wee may bee bettered and reformed by them : So shall they be infallible arguments of his fatherly loue towards vs : otherwise they will be fearfull tokens of his wrath, and certaine pledges of our condemnation.

2 Chr. 28. 22.

Thirdly, it teacheth vs to be patient vnder the crosse : For as the Apostle saith, If we haue had the fathers of our bodies which corrected vs, we gaue them reuerence : should we not much rather be in subiection vnto the Father of Spirites, that wee may liue? especially considering that it is so much for our good. A man that is sicke of a burning feuer, willingly suffereth himselfe

Vse 3.

Heb. 12. 9.

selfe to be let bloud, because he knoweth it is a meanes to abate the violence of his disease. A man that is pained with the stone, patiently yeeldeth himselfe to be cut and tortured by the *Physition*, because hee knoweth it is a means to preserue his life. A man that is wounded, meekly suffereth the *Surgeon* to launch and search his wound to the bottome, and with sharpe corasues to eat out the festered core of the vlcer, because hee knoweth he can not otherwise be cured. Shall all these endure, and that with admirable patience, so much torment for the good of their bodies, and shall not wee much more be willing, to suffer Gods sharpest corrections for the benefite of our soules? especially, seeing our owne sinnes haue deserued the greatest punishments that G O D can inflict. As the *Prophet* saith, *I wil beare the wrath of the Lord, because I haue sinned against him.* And therefore, let vs learne meekely and obediently to submitte our selues to the will of God in this case. And as hee sendeth affli-
 ctions

Micah 7.9.

otions with a right hand, let vs not take them with a left. An olde Courtier that had serued *Caligula*, *Claudius*, and *Nero*, three cruell tyrants, Emperours of *Rome*, being demaunded how he could escape the dangers of those times, wherein so many worthie Cittizens were put to death. Hee answered: Euen by taking benefits thankfully, and by putting vp iniuries patiently. If hee could for his owne safetie subdue his minde, to beare with patience the open iniuries of such monstrous tyrants: how much more should wee submitte our selues with all meeknesse to beare the louing corrections of our most merciful Father? And howsoeuer it may seeme, that God layeth heauier and sorer afflictions vpon vs, then vpon many others: yet wee must consider, that hee knoweth the corruption and hardnesse of our hearts to bee such as could not bee subdued with lighter corrections.

2 An hard knor, as the prouerb is, must haue an hard wedge. The *Physition* maketh his potions milder or stronger,

2 Malo nodo
malus cuneus.

as the quality of the sicknesse doth require. In like maner the Lord tempereth his corrections according to our disposition: if he see vs tractable, he dealeth more gently with vs: if we be vntamed and rebellious, hee layeth it on, and maketh vs feeble the smart. Neyther will hee euer cease to follow vs with one calamity after an other, till hee haue brought vs to our knees, and caused vs to humble our selues sufficiently vnder his hand.

That I may learne thy statutes.) Here the *Prophet* doth particularly declare that which before hee had generally propounded. Where by *Learning* hee doth not vnderstand that contemplatiue and speculatiue learning which swimmeth in the braine, and is gotten by hearing and reading of the word of God: but that particular learning, which is gotten by experience. In a word, his meaning is this, that hee felt the truth and comfort of the word, more powerfull and effectually in his afflictions, then at any time before, and that made him more carefull to
liue

line godly, when the crosse was removed, and the trouble gone. From hence wee learne, that the godly doe feelee the fruit of their afflictions, and are made better by he, when they are past and gone. They are not only good for the present, while they feelee the smart, for so an hypocrite may seeme to be, but the benefite of their afflictions remaineth with them all the daies of their liues. A prooffe heereof wee haue in the example of *Manassch*, who did not onely humble himselfe greatly before the Lord, as wee haue heard before, *when he was in tribulation*. But when God was intreated of him, and heard his prayer, and brought him again to Ierusalem into his kingdome, then he reformed himselfe from his wicked courses, and restored the true worship of God. He teake away the strange gods, and the Image out of the house of the Lord, and all the Altars which himselfe had built before, and cast them out of the city. And he prepared the Altar of the Lord, and offered sacrifice thereon, and commanded Iudab to serue the Lord
God

2 Chron. 33

12.

13.

15.

16.

Isa. 38. 3.

9. etc.

God of Israel. The like wee see in that good king *Hezekiah*, who was not only religiously and deuoutly affected in the time of sicknesse, when he was past hope of life (for there is none so wretched, but will make a shew of holinesse then) but *when hee was recovered of his sicknesse*, hee made a holy Song of thanksgiuing, wherein hee professeth the care that hee would haue of Gods seruice for the time to come : So that we see, the fruit of affliction endureth for euer vnto the children of God : otherwise they neuer made true vse of it, they neuer reaped any profite by it. But I will not stand any longer in the prosecuting of this point.

It serueth for the iust reproofe of all those that make a shew to be somewhat good, in the time of trouble, but when it is gone, they are as badde as euer they were. So long as they feele the hand of GOD vpon them, they promise great reformation, but all is but hypocrisie. For they are no sooner enlarged, but they returne vnto their former courses with as much greediness.

2 Per. 2. 22.

greedinesse, as euer did the dog to his vomite. And herein they are like children, who while the rodde is on their backs, promise great matters, that they will neuer do the like againe but they remember that promise no longer then they fee the smart of the rodde. And this wee see in the example of *Pharaoh*, who so long as the plague was heavy vpon him & his land, made no small shew of repentaunce, and promised, that if *Moses* and *Aaron* would pray for him, that the plague might be removed, hee would *let the people goe, they should tarry no longer. Exodus 9. 27, 28. and 10 16, 17.* But as soone as euer God had spared him at their intreaty, he was so farre from performing his promise, as his heart was more hardened, then euer it was before. Iron, whilest it is in the fire, is soft, and pliable, and may be wrought into any forme: but if it bee taken from the fire a little, it straitway returneth to his former hardnesse. In like maner, many men, while they are in the furnace of affliction, seem to haue soft & melting

melting hearts, and make great shew
of remorse for their sinnes: but after-
wards, their hearts become as hard as
the Adamant. And thus men doe vse
their repentance like an olde garment,
they cast it about them in a storme or
a shewer: but as soone as it is faire
weather, they lay it by againe. But let
vs bee carefull to make such an holie
and sanctified vse of our afflictions,
when they be vpon vs, that wee may
be the better for them all our life after.
This point is necessary to be enlarged,

a In the re-
pentance of
Peter and
Judas;

but I haue handled it a elsewhere,
and therefore I will insist
no longer vpon it
at this time.

FINIS.